

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00
COME-00 EB-08 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 AGRE-00
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R 240544Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1470
INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL BOMBAY
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMCONSUL MADRAS
USLO PEKING
CINCPAC HONOLULU

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PING, IN
SUBJECT: CONGRESS FOR DEMOCRACY ISSUES ITS ELECTION MANIFESTO

REF: (A) NEW DELHI 1595, (B) NEW DELHI 2093

1. JAGJIVAN RAM'S CONGRESS FOR DEMOCRACY (CFD) ISSUED
ITS ELECTION MANIFESTO ON FEBRUARY 21, THE LAST POLITICAL
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PARTY TO DO SO. THE DOCUMENT REPEATS MANY OF THE THEMES AND
ALLEGATIONS CONTAINED IN THE STATEMENT ISSUED BY RAM AND THE
OTHERS WHEN THEY RESIGNED ON FEBRUARY 2ND (REFTEL A). THE
MANIFESTO DESCRIBES THE CFD AS THE "REVOLT OF THE CONSCIENCE
OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS", THE PARTY'S MAIN PURPOSE
IS TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE ORIGINAL ORGANIZATION'S RICH
TRADITIONS AND GOALS AS WELL AS TO ELIMINATE FEAR FROM

PUBLIC LIFE AND RESTORE CIVIL LIBERTIES BY ENDING THE EMERGENCY. AFTER CRITICIZING THE "LIQUIDATION" OF DEMOCRACY AND THE MISUSE OF GOVERNMENT MACHINERY TO PROJECT "EXTRA-CONSTITUTIONAL CENTERS OF POWER" (8.E., SANJAY), IT PLEDGES THAT THE CFD WILL IMPLEMENT THE EIGHT DEMANDS CONTAINED IN THE FEBRUARY 2 STATEMENT (LIFTING THE EMERGENCY, REPEALING MISA, ETC.) AS WELL AS TO RESTORE THE RIGHT TO HABEAS CORPUS, TO ABOLISH THE RIGHT TO PROPERTY AND TO REPEAL THOSE PROVISIONS OF THE 42ND AMENDMENT BILL DEALING WITH "ANTI-NATIONAL ACTIVITIES", CURBS ON THE JUDICIARY AND THE CENTER'S POWER TO DEPLOY TROOPS IN THE STATES.

2. IN THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC FIELD, THE CFD MANIFESTO CLOSELY PARALLELS THE CONGRESS MANIFESTO ITSELF -- THOUGH WITH AN EMPHASIS ON THE SHORTCOMINGS RATHER THAN THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF GOI POLICIES OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS. THERE ARE THE USUAL CALLS FOR A FAIR DEAL FOR INDUSTRIAL WORKERS, VIGOROUS IMPLEMENTATION OF LAND REFORMS, ENHANCING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, AND ENSURING THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND MINORITIES. THE MANIFESTO COMMITS THE PARTY TO ESTABLISH A JUDICIAL ENQUIRY INTO "ALL ADMINISTRATIVE EXCESSES DURING THE EMERGENCY AND REVIEW ALL THE ARBITRARY AND ANTI-PEOPLE AND ANTI-DEMOCRATIC LEGISLATION" PASSED DURING THIS PERIOD.

3. THE DOCUMENT DEVOTES LITTLE ATTENTION TO FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES OTHER THAN TO REAFFIRM INDIA'S INDEPENDENT STANCE, WORK FOR COMPREHENSIVE DISARMAMENT, STRENGTHEN FRIENDSHIP WITH THE "SOCIALIST COUNTRIES" AND TO BUILD BRIDGES OF FRIENDSHIP WITH INDIA'S NEIGHBORS, "PARTICULARLY WITH OUR BROTHERS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH". IT ALSO PLEDGES THE PARTY TO MAINTAIN THE COUNTRY'S INDEPENDENCE "IN RESPECT OF PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY".

4. COMMENT: THE ESSENTIAL SIMILARITIES IN GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITIES BETWEEN THE CONGRESS AND CFD MANIFESTOS SEEM TO UNDERLINE JAGJIVAN RAM'S CONTENTION THAT HIS PARTY REPRESENTS THE "TRUE" CONGRESS AND THAT HIS ONLY INTENT IS TO "PURIFY" A PARTY THAT HAD STRAYED FROM ITS LONGSTANDING TRADITIONS AND GOALS. RAM AND JANATA PARTY LEADERS HAVE EVEN STATED THAT SHOULD THEY COME TO POWER THEY ENVISAGE REMARKABLY FEW CHANGES IN GOI SOCIO-ECONOMIC OR FOREIGN POLICIES. THE CFD AND JANATA MANIFESTOS, THUS, ARE ESSENTIALLY VARIATIONS ON A FAMILIAR THEME -- VARIATIONS SEEN, HOWEVER, THROUGH THE EYES OF THOSE WHO OPPOSE MRS. GANDHI AND THE EMERGENCY. SCHNEIDER

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Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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